

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CATHOLIC BISHOP SUPPORTS RIGHT TO ABORTION?

TUCSON, Ariz – On the eve of the U.S. Bishops' Conference in Los Angeles (June 15-17), more and more Catholics are asking, is Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas (Tucson, Arizona) assisting pro-abortion candidates in their campaigns for public office? “The Bishop’s deafening silence vis-à-vis pro-choice politicians campaigning in locales under his canonical oversight is fueling this developing scandal,” says Kelly Copeland, Director of the Holy Family Society of Tucson.<sup>1</sup> “Does the Bishop’s tacit consent, and permission given to pro-choice politicians to speak, constitute support for abortion rights and politicians supporting them?”<sup>2</sup>

Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, well-known for her aggressive pro-choice activism, generated large protests among the faithful when she came to Tucson on March 25<sup>th</sup> to draw support for Richard Elias, member of the Pima County Board of Supervisors, and Steve Leal, Tucson City Councilman.<sup>3</sup> According to witnesses at the event, held at the hall of a local Knights of Columbus chapter under the canonical oversight of Bishop Kicanas, the right to abortion was publicly advocated.<sup>4</sup> In days preceding and following the event, Bishop Kicanas refused to be vigilant as he is obliged to be under canon 305 of the Code of Canon Law.<sup>5</sup> In April 2005, Bishop Kicanas even allowed Napolitano to speak from the pulpit at a Tucson Catholic Church.<sup>6</sup> “What is going on here?” asks Copeland. “Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.”

In June 2004, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops forbade the granting of speaking platforms or the giving of honors to “those who act in defiance of fundamental moral principles which ‘would suggest support for their actions’ according to the Statement “Catholics in Political Life” adopted by the Bishops at their semi-annual meeting that year.<sup>7</sup> “In an increasing amount of smokescreen activism reported by the press, Bishop Kicanas has not only remained outrageously inactive when obligated to enforce this USCCB norm in his Diocese, but has heaped lavish praise upon those who notoriously defy fundamental moral principles in contradiction with both Vatican and USCCB norms – and not only in matters concerning abortion” says Copeland.<sup>8</sup>

“In open departure from official doctrine, Bishop Kicanas has preached that the fight against poverty -- not abortion as Pope John Paul II taught -- as “first and foremost” among moral duties<sup>9</sup>; honored radical pro-homosexual marriage activists such as Rep. Jim Kolbe with glowing and fond words<sup>10</sup>; spoken against Vatican policy encouraging intervention by public authority in regulating Internet content<sup>11</sup>; and sided with migrants who break the law to gain access into this country against the explicit teaching of the Catechism, which holds that a nation has the sovereign right to set conditions for legal entry.”<sup>12</sup>

“The bottom line is this” says Copeland, “when you see a thief entering your neighbor’s house and the neighbor being robbed heaps praise upon the thief, you seriously begin to wonder.”

*Holy Family Society is a non-profit supporting life, family, and country. For more information visit: [www.hfsnews.org](http://www.hfsnews.org)*

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<sup>1</sup> **Bishop Kicanas:** Bishop Kicanas, when informed by Kelly Copeland that Governor Napolitano was going to speak at the Knights of Columbus Arizona Council 1200 facility, stated that he has “no control over what the Knights do just as he has no control over other Catholic organizations that are not on Church property.” Bishop Kicanas to date has never publicly condemned the visit of Governor Napolitano at the Knights of Columbus facility, either before, during, or after the event.

**Roman Catholic Church’s Official Doctrine:** Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, Art. 82: “Faced with so many opposing points of view, and a widespread rejection of sound doctrine concerning human life, we can feel that Paul's entreaty to Timothy is also addressed to us: "Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching" (2 Tim 4:2). This exhortation should resound with special force in the hearts of those members of the Church who directly share, in different ways, in her mission as "teacher" of the truth. May it resound above all for us who are **Bishops: we are the first ones called to be untiring preachers of the Gospel of life. We are also entrusted with the task of ensuring that the doctrine which is once again being set forth in this Encyclical is faithfully handed on in its integrity. We must use appropriate means to defend the faithful from all teaching which is contrary to it.** We need to make sure that in theological faculties, seminaries **and Catholic institutions** sound doctrine is taught, explained and more fully investigated. May Paul's exhortation strike a chord in all theologians, pastors, teachers and in all those responsible for catechesis and the formation of consciences. Aware of their specific role, may they never be so grievously irresponsible as to betray the truth and their own mission by proposing personal ideas contrary to the Gospel of life as faithfully presented and interpreted by the Magisterium. In the proclamation of this Gospel, we must not fear hostility or unpopularity, and we must refuse any compromise or ambiguity which might conform us to the world's way of thinking (cf. Rom 12:2). We must be in the world but not of the world (cf. Jn 15:19; 17:16), drawing our strength from Christ, who by his Death and Resurrection has overcome the world (cf. Jn 16:33).”

**Canon 754 of the Code of Canon Law:** “All Christ’s faithful are obliged to observe the constitutions and decrees which lawful ecclesiastical authority issues for the proposing or of proscribing erroneous opinions; this holds particularly for those published by the Roman Pontiff or by the College of Bishops.”

<sup>2</sup> **Bishop Kicanas:** Bishop Kicanas permitted Governor Janet Napolitano to speak from the pulpit of a Tucson Catholic Church: “Other bishops, including Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, have taken a softer approach. Kicanas said he has not established a blanket policy for the Diocese of Tucson. In fact, Napolitano was **allowed** to speak in a Tucson Catholic church in April for the 15th anniversary of the Pima County Interfaith Council, Tucson church spokesman Fred Allison said.” Cf. <http://www.azcentral.com/12news/news/articles/0805bishop-gov05-CP.html>

**Roman Catholic Church’s Official Doctrine:** Pope Boniface VIII, “*Qui tacet consentire videtur,*” translated, “He who is silent is to be seen as to consent”, in VI, V, XII, RJ 43: This is a canonical reflex principle which, when applied in the context of an individual who remains silent when an obligation or duty requires that he act or speak, establishes consent on the part of the malicious or negligent party.

**Can. 299 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law:** “By private agreement among themselves, Christ’s faithful have the right to constitute associations for the purposes mentioned in can. 298 § 1, without prejudice to the provisions of can. 301 § 1.”

**Can. 305 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law:** “All associations of Christ’s faithful are subject to the supervision of the competent ecclesiastical authority. **The authority is to ensure that integrity of faith and morals is maintained** in them and that abuses in ecclesiastical discipline do not creep in. The competent authority has therefore the duty and the right to visit these associations in accordance with the law and the statutes.

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Associations are also subject to the governance of the same authority in accordance with provisions of the canons which follow”;

**Can. 305 § 2 of the Code of Canon Law:** “Associations of every kind are subject to the supervision of the Holy See. Diocesan associations are **subject to the supervision of the local Ordinary, as are other associations to the extent that they work in the diocese.**”

**Can. 392 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law:** “Since the Bishop must defend the unity of the universal Church, he is bound to foster the discipline which is common for the whole Church, and so press for the observance of all ecclesiastical laws”;

**Can. 323 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law:** “Although private associations of Christ’s faithful enjoy their own autonomy in accordance with can. 321, they are subject to the supervision of ecclesiastical authority, in accordance with can. 305, and also to the **governance of the same authority.**”

<sup>3</sup> Cf. KVOA article, *supra*

<sup>4</sup> KVOA News 4, Tucson Arizona, March 26, 2006 Report: “Richard Elias, a member of the Pima County Board of Supervisors, says, ‘I think we also protect a woman’s right to choose’; ‘I’m Catholic and I’m pro-choice,’ says Elias. ‘I think they are all issues that we have to come to on a personal level, and make a decision of our own’”

<sup>5</sup> **Bishop Kicanas:** Notes, Kelly Copeland, *supra*: Bishop Kicanas refused to intervene before, during, or after the campaigning at the Knights of Columbus event even though Canon Law mandates that the Ordinary supervise and protect the Faith and Morals when endangered within his Diocese. See *infra*:

**Can. 305 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law:** “All associations of Christ’s faithful are subject to the supervision of the competent ecclesiastical authority. **The authority is to ensure that integrity of faith and morals is maintained** in them and that abuses in ecclesiastical discipline do not creep in. The competent authority has therefore the duty and the right to visit these associations in accordance with the law and the statutes. Associations are also subject to the governance of the same authority in accordance with provisions of the canons which follow”;

**Can. 305 § 2 of the Code of Canon Law:** “Associations of every kind are subject to the supervision of the Holy See. Diocesan associations are **subject to the supervision of the local Ordinary, as are other associations to the extent that they work in the diocese.**”;

<sup>6</sup> **Bishop Kicanas** permitted **Governor Janet Napolitano** to speak from the pulpit of a Tucson Catholic Church: “Other bishops, including Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, have taken a softer approach. Kicanas said he has not established a blanket policy for the Diocese of Tucson. In fact, Napolitano **was allowed** to speak in a Tucson Catholic church in April for the 15th anniversary of the Pima County Interfaith Council, Tucson church spokesman Fred Allison said.” Cf.

<http://www.azcentral.com/12news/news/articles/0805bishop-gov05-CP.html>

<sup>7</sup> **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:** Statement, “Catholics in Political Life,” June 2004: “The Catholic community and Catholic institutions should **not honor** those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles. They should not be given awards, honors or platforms which would suggest support for their actions.” Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/bishops/catholicsinpoliticallife.shtml>

<sup>8</sup> **Bishop Kicanas:** “Guest opinion,” Arizona Daily Star, May 23, 2006: “Over the years, Rep. Jim Kolbe has been a good and faithful advocate of assistance to lift up the poorest of the poor. **I salute him for the good**

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*work he has done and the millions of lives he has helped to save through his support of effective foreign aid.*” Cf. <http://mobile.azstarnet.com/altds/PDA/opinion/130292.html>

<sup>9</sup> **Bishop Kicanas:** “Guest opinion,” Arizona Daily Star, May 23, 2006: “**First and foremost, it is our moral duty to help our brothers and sisters who live in poverty.** The moral measure of any society is how it treats “the least among us,” and the United States has historically heeded the call to invest in people and communities around the world. Clearly, our European allies and other rich nations need to do their fair share as well.” Cf. <http://mobile.azstarnet.com/altds/PDA/opinion/130292.html>

<sup>10</sup> **Bishop Kicanas:** “Guest opinion,” Arizona Daily Star, May 23, 2006: “Over the years, Rep. Jim Kolbe has been a good and faithful advocate of assistance to lift up the poorest of the poor. **I salute him** for the good work he has done and the millions of lives he has helped to save through his support of effective foreign aid.” Cf. <http://mobile.azstarnet.com/altds/PDA/opinion/130292.html>

**Roman Catholic Church’s Official Teaching:** Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laci*, 38, in USCCB Statement on Responsibilities in Public Life, March 10, 2006: “[T]he common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights – for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture -[missing verb?]false and illusory if the **right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination.**”

<sup>11</sup> **Roman Catholic Church’s Official Policy:** Pontifical Council for Social Communications, “The Church and the Internet”, Art. 8c, 28 February 2002: “And while respect for free expression may require tolerating even voices of hatred up to a point, industry self-regulation—and, **where required, intervention by public authority—should establish and enforce reasonable limits to what can be said.**” Cf. [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/pccs/documents/rc\\_pc\\_pccs\\_doc\\_20020228\\_church-internet\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_20020228_church-internet_en.html)

**Bishop Kicanas:** In contrast, the Bishop was reported by the *Arizona Daily Star* as stating the following: ““Unless there are in place **protections against Internet access providers' control over content, noncommercial religious speech on the Internet is threatened,**” Kicanas wrote..” Cf. <http://www.azstarnet.com/metro/130715>

<sup>12</sup> **Bishop Kicanas:** Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas reported in the Press as siding with illegal immigrants: “*The Desert Sun*, 12 March 2006: “A couple years ago, Tucson Bishop Gerald Kicanas wandered into the church in Altar, Sonora, looking for the parish priest. He was startled by what he found instead - 18 young men in worn sweatshirts and work pants, kneeling or sitting by themselves in the pews, heads bowed. The migrants were about to set out on foot across the desert toward Arizona. ‘We think of young people as not at all religious,’ Kicanas said, ‘and here were young men, they were probably between 17 and 22, just fervent in prayer, putting their lives in the hands of God.’ ...Catholic leaders across the Southwest are showing a growing **willingness to weigh in on the side of immigrants** in the acrimonious political debate over solving **illegal immigration** and securing the nation's borders.” Cf. <http://www.thedesertsun.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060312/LIFESTYLES06/603120319>

**Roman Catholic Church’s Official Teaching:** Catechism of the Catholic Church, Art. 2241b: “Political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible, **may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical conditions, especially with regard to the immigrants' duties toward their country of adoption. Immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens.**”